

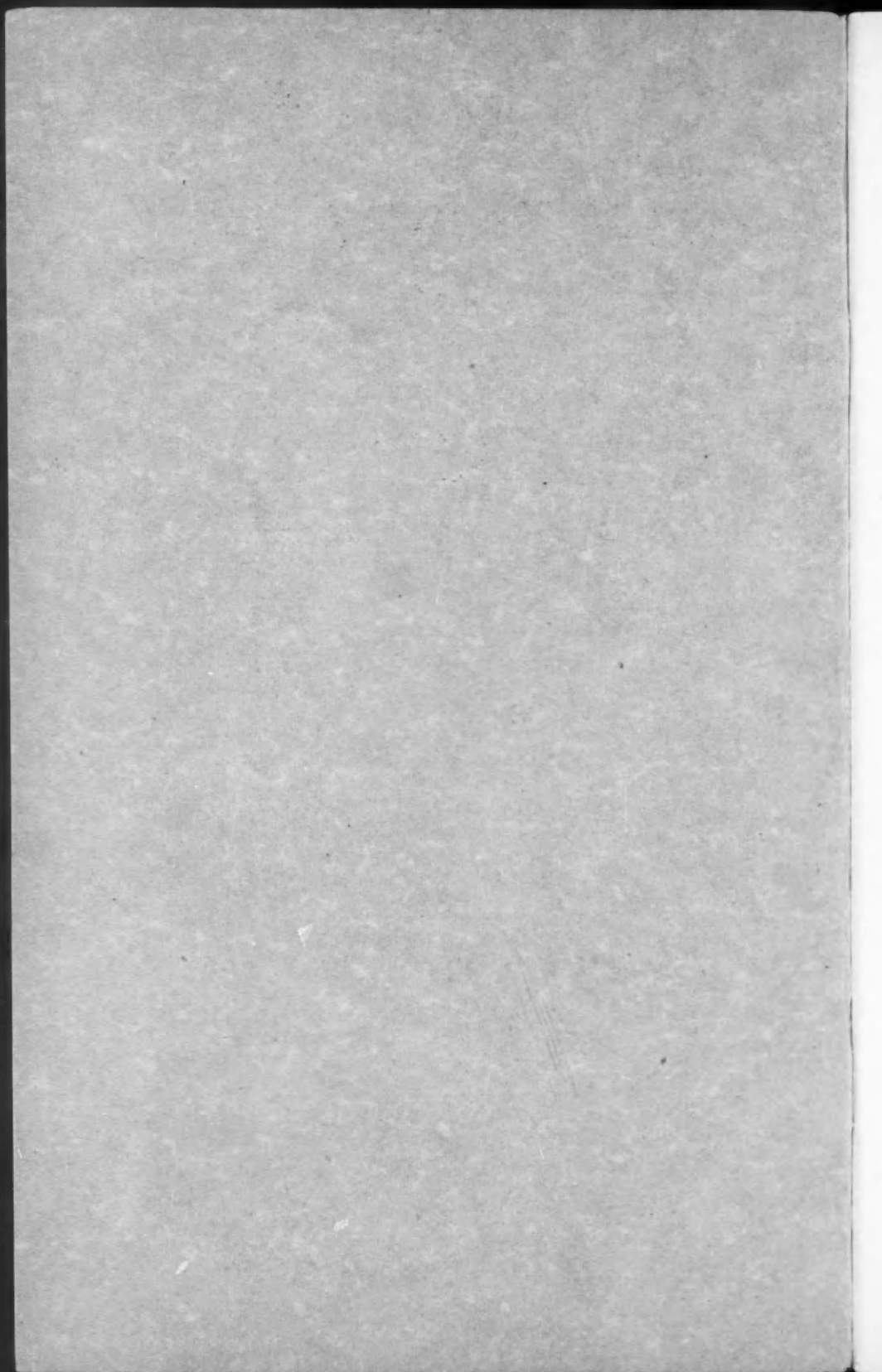
THE CONSORT

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FOREWORD

ONCE more we wish to express our gratitude to all the contributors to this issue of THE CONSORT, and especially:—

To Mrs. Arnold Dolmetsch for another instalment of her personal recollections of Arnold Dolmetsch and for the photographs and an original drawing by William Rothenstein she has allowed us to reproduce ;

To Mrs. Louise Dyer for permission to quote a Prelude by Louis Couperin as it appears in the Lyre Bird Edition of his works ;

To Mr. Richard Newton for giving us the first fruits of his careful and discerning research concerning Marin Marais and for his promise of more to come as his work proceeds.

Permission to quote extracts from George Bernard Shaw's *Music in London* has been kindly granted by the Society of Authors and the Public Trustee.

François Couperin's Prefaces to his Third and Fourth Books of Harpsichord Pieces have been newly translated for The Consort.

THE EDITOR.

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This copy is No. 18.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF
ARNOLD DOLMETSCH

BY

MABEL DOLMETSCH

PART 3

THE last decade of the 19th century, during which period Arnold Dolmetsch instituted his revival of the ancient music and instruments, was fortunate in the possession of a number of distinguished musical critics. Foremost among these was George Bernard Shaw. His open-minded approach and musical sensitivity, combined with his spontaneous Irish wit, made his criticisms not only entertaining but also highly constructive. His masterly handling of this most difficult art is well illustrated in his criticisms of the Dolmetsch concerts in the second and third volumes of *Music in London 1890-1894* (Constable 1932 and recently reprinted).

When reporting a concert given in Dulwich on January the 30th, 1894, he comments on the beautiful compositions for viols of King Henry VIII, which, he says, did more to rehabilitate that monarch in his estimation "than all the arguments of Mr. Froude." He was deeply impressed by Sheryngam's dialogue *Ah, Gentill Jhesu*, set for four voices, four viols and organ (15th century), of which he says: "It has all the naiveté, the conscientious workmanship, the deep expression and the devout beauty of that period. . . . But once the corner is turned and the Middle Ages left behind, that charm that is akin to the charm of childhood or old age is left behind too; and thenceforth only the man of genius has power. . . ."

The fifth concert of that series (April 10th) drew from Shaw a disquisition which reveals his strong appreciation of the grand old English school of contrapuntal music for viols, which "completely free from all operatic and literary aims, ought, one might have supposed, to have sounded quaintly archaic. But not a bit of it. It made operatic music sound positively wizened in comparison." Shaw was greatly excited when the students of the Royal College of Music, at the instigation of Sir George Grove, asked Arnold Dolmetsch to make them a clavichord. Seemingly ignorant of Dolmetsch's previous workshop education, Shaw wrote on July 4th, 1894: "It was rather a staggering request to a collector and connoisseur; but Mr. Dolmetsch, in the spirit of the Irishman who was invited to play the fiddle, had a try; and

after some month's work he has actually turned out a little masterpiece, excellent as a musical instrument and pleasant to look at, which seems to me likely to begin such a revolution in domestic musical instruments as William Morris' work made in domestic furniture and decoration, or Philip Webb's in domestic architecture. I therefore estimate the birth of this little clavichord as, on a moderate computation, about 40,000 times as important as the Handel Festival."

This prophecy appears to be approaching its fulfilment nearly sixty years after its utterance.

Shedlock, musical critic to *The Athenæum*, earned the nation's gratitude by rediscovering Purcell's complete "opera," *The Fairy Queen*, supposed to have been lost, except for a few isolated songs published separately in contemporary collections. One day in 1897, while strolling through the library of the Royal College of Music, he glanced idly at one of the shelves and found himself confronted by a portly volume whose back bore the title *Fairy Queen : Purcell*. Had it been quietly returned by some conscience-stricken borrower, or had it lain there all the time unnoticed? Soon after its sensational discovery it was performed in Birmingham Town Hall under Hans Richter, with Arnold himself playing the continuo on his famous "green harpsichord." Though a keen and scholarly man, Shedlock was a cold writer. He frequently came forward after a concert, glowing with praise and pleasure; yet his subsequent written report would appear as a pale and lifeless shadow of his former enthusiasm.

Very much the contrary was John Runciman on the staff of *The Saturday Review*. He was a fiery-faced Yorkshireman, with a flaming shock of red hair and an equally fiery pen. Though an excellent musician, he lacked, as a writer, the subtle art of Shaw. On one occasion he surpassed himself by referring to a popular reciter to piano accompaniment as a "braying ass," and found himself brought into court, with ill results. Arnold, however, having himself a strong vein of recklessness, always interpreted Runciman with the requisite humour, and respected his good musicianship.

At the early concerts which I attended, I used to remark a tall, fresh-complexioned man, hovering uncertainly in the doorway, programme in hand. I learned on enquiry that this some-



ARNOLD DOLMETSCH



ARNOLD DOLMETSCH IN "COURT
COSTUME" PLAYING THE VIOLA
DA GAMBA



MABEL JOHNSTON PLAYING THE
VIOLONE



ARNOLD DOLMETSCH
A Snapshot taken by George Bernard Shaw
(See note on page 9).

what aloof personage was Fuller Maitland, of *The Times* (co-editor with Barclay Squire, of the Fitzwilliam Virginal Book). Personal relations between him and the Dolmetsch ensemble had apparently received a check after the meteoric descent into their midst of Elodie, who, with her brilliant execution and compelling personality, henceforth carried all before her, to the complete elimination of her predecessors on the keyboard instruments. Despite this circumstance, he continued to write fair and impartial criticisms of the Dolmetsch concerts. Other fleeting figures in the world of musical criticism were Arthur Symons the poet (at one time attached to *The Star*) and Robert Hichens. Arthur Symons' appreciation of Arnold Dolmetsch's work is beautifully expressed in his book called *Plays, Acting and Music*. The chapter entitled "A Reflection at a Dolmetsch Concert" opens with this sentence: "The interpreter of ancient music, Arnold Dolmetsch, is one of those rare magicians who are able to make roses blossom in midwinter."

I well remember the imposing appearance of Robert Hichens as he stalked into the music room at 7, Bayley Street, his inward thoughts masked by an enigmatic smile. "What will be his reaction," I wondered, "to the ethereal charm of this music?" It was sympathetic and appreciative, though he bordered on the facetious in describing the skill with which Arnold Dolmetsch presented his subject as "artlessly artful, or artfully artless."

A sudden break in established routine was occasioned by a visit of the Dolmetsch ensemble to Italy. This exciting adventure was brought about by Herbert Horne (who, during the winter months, made his home in an ancient Florentine palace), and fostered by the Ludwig Monds, also periodical dwellers in that land of romance and beauty. On their first evening in Florence the Dolmetsches were serenaded at their open window by a band of musicians who offered them handsome bouquets. They were delighted with this delicate compliment, though their gratification was tempered with irony when, a few days later, they were also presented with a bill of expenses!

Their concert in Rome was indeed a triumph, being honoured by the presence of Queen Marguerita and members of the court. After the concert they were presented to the Queen, who, in expressing her appreciation of the ancient Italian music which had composed the programme, asked the maestro what

he would like her to give him as a memento of the occasion. But Arnold, alas no courtier, answered "Nothing, thank you Madame." Other notable persons among the audience were Count Primoli, the arch diplomat, with his friend, the poet Gabriele d'Annunzio, still in his twenties, and the tragedienne, Eleanora Duse, then at her zenith. In full accordance with her spectacular generosity, she presented them with immense baskets piled high with flowers. She also intimated her desire to come and visit them; *but* on condition that their host and hostess (the Ludwig Mond) should absent themselves, as she was tired of meeting new people. With this stipulation the Monds most obligingly complied! Duse and Elodie became close friends, having indeed many characteristics in common. Arnold was more particularly attracted towards d'Annunzio. They took a long country walk together, during which he found himself viewing their surroundings as though through the poet's eyes, and remarking new and unthought-of beauties in every detail of landscape, trees and flowers. All seemed enhanced with a dream-like enchantment. This responsiveness appears to have been reciprocal, both musically and visually; and whenever these two met in after years, it was instantly rekindled.

Herbert Horne constituted himself a most assiduous guide and companion during the intervals between the concerts, piloting his friend to famous churches, libraries and restaurants, and visiting people of note. Arnold, his imagination fired by the superb Italian organists of past centuries, was disappointed in their modern successors, whose art during the late 19th century had descended to a low level by comparison with the great Frescobaldi and others of his generation. Of artists, he was especially interested in the Cantagali family who, at their Florentine potteries, made exquisite reproductions of the ancient della Robbia ware, in addition to other creations of their own design. One of these, consisting of a set of square-shaped tea cups, was not altogether felicitous; for, however one held the cup to the lip, the tea was apt to run out at one or other of the corners (as Arnold discovered).

They took him to see the Brownings' "clavichord," which instrument was said to have inspired the poet to write the lyric entitled "A Toccata of Galuppi's," containing the lines: "While

you sat and played Toccatas, stately at the clavichord." Under Arnold Dolmetsch's scrutiny, however, it revealed itself as a square piano!

Some profitable hours were spent in the library of Bologna, copying music from ancient manuscripts. The greatest treasure of all was acquired unexpectedly during a visit to a decayed nobleman who owned a reputed Amati violin. While he was chaffering with the nobleman as to the price demanded for the instrument, his attention was arrested by the sight of a curious-looking manuscript lying on the floor. On picking it up, he discovered that it contained a collection of 15th and 16th century music written in lute tablature, and that the first page was stamped with *Three Balls* (the device of the Medici!). The owner appeared to set small store by it, and Arnold was able to acquire, for a trifling sum, this unique manuscript whose contents were found to be of outstanding beauty and interest.

Horne was something of a *gourmet*, and together they visited various far-famed restaurants. At one of these, Arnold remarked an item on the menu entitled "Irisk Stev." Impelled by curiosity, he ordered a portion, and found it to consist of a savoury *curry*. The waiter, when his attention was called to the misleading title, merely asked if it was *good*. Reassured on this point, he concluded with a shrug of relief: "*Va bene!*"

Such was the success of this tour that a return visit was arranged for the following year. This time, Hélène was included in the party, which circumstance added yet further *éclat* to the concerts. On the previous occasion the part of solo violist had been sustained by Beatrice, the sister of Herbert Horne, who, although an efficient performer, did not possess the artistry and attractiveness of Hélène. Part of Hélène's charm lay in the fact that the greater the virtuosity required by the music she was playing, the more bland became her smile; whereas Beatrice's features assumed a grim fixity.

On the homeward journey, as the train reached the frontier dividing French from Italian territory, the maestro narrowly escaped arrest as a suspicious character. A uniformed official, after peering in at the window, wrenched open the door and asked fiercely: "*Who are you?*" (Travellers carried no passports in those days). Arnold gave his name; and the dialogue (in

Italian) proceeded on these lines: "*That's a lie!* For what purpose did you come to Italy?"—"To give concerts."—"That's a lie!" Then, indicating Hélène, "*Who is this Lady?*"—"She is my daughter."—"That's a lie!!" Just as they had arrived at this *impasse*, the situation was saved by the guard of the train, who came along shouting: "*That isn't the man you are looking for! Why, he has a whole van-load of big fiddles at the back of the train!*" With a courteous apology, the uniformed individual withdrew.

This tour provided many new experiences, among which was a visit to the den of the still enterprising, though hoary, Florentine craftsman who fabricated "antique" musical instruments for sale to innocent tourists. This old man had a passion for collecting carved roses (openwork sound holes), from lutes, virginals, etc. Whenever a genuine antique came his way, he used to remove the rose and substitute one of his own manufacture. Then, from the remainder of the instrument, he would sometimes evolve two, or even three, instruments, using parts of the original in each and cleverly imitating the rest. But with all his skill, he made no attempt to render the instruments playable! They were just show pieces, made to adorn drawing-rooms. Arnold's attention was called to a particularly flamboyant harpsichord. Feeling strong doubts as to its authenticity, he asked guilelessly if it was *really* all original (as claimed). The old man assured him that it truly *was*. Then, suddenly remarking a queer look, he added hastily: "*Ristorato!* (pause) *Molto ristorato!*"

The Italian tours brought about the welcome addition of an enthusiastic and talented new member to the Dolmetsch circle, in the person of a young American musician named Janet Dodge. She was living in Florence at the time and had made friends with Beatrice Horne, from whom she learned to play the tenor viol. Soon after the Dolmetsch family's second visit she came to England and for a time lived in their house at 7, Bayley Street. Being a good keyboard player and capable of accompanying from the figured bass, she became a useful auxiliary at the harpsichord. Harpsichordists were rare in those days; and when, in 1898, Elodie fell ill and had to undergo a serious operation, Janet, though not possessing the brilliance of Elodie, was yet able to fill the gap most creditably.

She was a cultured and entertaining person, who loved a good story. But she did not always appreciate her host's sense of humour. Imbued with the Anglo-Saxon horror of garlic, she was convinced that the merest taste would make her sick. One day Arnold (an expert cook, who had been *reared* on garlic) served up a savoury leg of mutton for dinner. Janet pronounced it *delicious* and had two helpings; but when, at the end of the meal, dancing with glee, he disclosed the *secret* of its excellence, Janet burst into tears and rushed from the room. Although she had unwittingly enjoyed the garlic, she couldn't relish the joke!

About this time Messrs. Hill had the good fortune to acquire a quintette of stringed instruments by Maggini (c. 1600) which had been preserved in an old French chateau. The two violins, viola and violoncello, were quickly sold at extravagant prices; but nobody wanted the violone (a small six-stringed double-bass viol, formerly used in chamber music). Arnold waited for a year or more until the price came within his reach, and then mustered his *all* and bought it! Janet, to her gratification, was constituted violone player, and henceforth the deep, sonorous tones of this beautiful instrument enriched the ensemble in concerted music.

Soon after Elodie's recovery, Janet returned to Florence for a spell, whereupon the violone became *my* speciality. Such it has remained ever since; for, when Janet eventually came back, it transpired that Elodie had taken a violent dislike to her. On that account she did not rejoin the ensemble as an active member, but contented herself with the more passive rôle of listener at all the Dolmetsch concerts. In later years she derived unalloyed satisfaction through devoting herself to the study of the lute and its copious literature. She also acquired a fine harpsichord, in whose restoration I had the pleasure of assisting. But Elodie and Janet remained, for evermore, irreconcilable.

The Dolmetsch concerts continued to be well patronised, the audiences (usually seasoned with a sprinkling of picturesque personalities) showing their appreciation without stint. One evening, indeed, Madame Blanche Marchesi applauded with such gusto that there was a sudden crash, as her slender "Art Worker's Guild" chair collapsed beneath her. There were even occasions when the room was more than filled, and the audiences overflowed onto the outside landing and staircase, the doors being removed to facilitate their participation. Arnold began to

long for a larger concert room. Looking round, he discovered a house in Charlotte Street, near Fitzroy Square, which possessed a fine studio in the ideal proportions of a double square, and equipped with a raised platform at the further end. This seemed to him a very lucky move to make. He therefore sublet his house in Bayley Street to a garrulous Italian musician, who announced his intention of converting it into a music club. In the confusion of the moving, a magnificent arch-lute, made of ivory and ebony, was stolen, and never afterwards traced.

It was a long time before Arnold finally relinquished all hopes of recovering this superb instrument which he had obtained in a sale at Christie's by boldly bidding every penny he possessed. When it was held up to view by the auctioneer, a fancier timidly ventured a bid of five pounds. Arnold turned on him, fiercely exclaiming: "*Five pounds? Nonsense! Fifty pounds!*" This was followed by an astounded silence; and the instrument was knocked down to him. This may appear to some as recklessness carried to the point of folly; but the genius that fired him could brook no restraint. His instruments and books were to him necessities, forming a starting point from which to carry on his work of research and reconstruction. The remark which Lucy Shaw attributed to her brother, that all the money which Dolmetsch made on his concert tours was swallowed up by his workshop, was not far from the truth.

The acoustics of the new music room were excellent; and a highly successful series of concerts was held in it soon after the family had settled in. I can call to mind various people of outstanding interest among the audience, such as Violet Gordon Woodhouse, the Emery Walkers, W. B. Yeats with his muse, Florence Farr, dear old Van Wafelghem (the pioneer reviver of the viola d'amore) and Sir Henry Wood with his Russian wife. All the instruments were heard to full advantage; and Robert Cocks, the music publisher (whose hobby was the making of phonograph records) was so charmed with their sonority that he brought all his elaborate apparatus and made some beautiful recordings on wax cylinders which reproduced most admirably the tone colour of the various instruments. What became of them after his death I do not know.

Here, for a while, we will take leave of Arnold Dolmetsch, happy in the possession of his new music room.

END OF PART THREE

NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

1. The silhouette of Arnold Dolmetsch was cut out by an artist named Scotford at a fair.
2. This picture of Arnold Dolmetsch (playing a viola da gamba made by Barak Norman) bears witness to his amazing versatility. He brought his innate musicianship to bear on the sonatas of J. S. Bach for this instrument with fine effect. He is dressed in a "court costume" designed and made by Edith Craig, daughter of Ellen Terry.
3. The pose of myself playing the Maggini violone was suggested by an amusing coincidence. When Ferruccio Busoni visited the Dolmetsch family at 85, Charlotte Street, they played to him on their various instruments (harpsichord, viola d'amore, viola da gamba, etc.). At the close of this display, he turned towards me, saying: "I know which instrument Miss Johnston ought to play," and pointed to an engraving of Domenichino's picture of St. Cecilia playing on a violone. They explained with much laughter that that was what I did play! Thereupon I showed him the Maggini violone; and when, soon afterwards, we had some photographs taken, Arnold Dolmetsch called out: "Now! Try to look like St. Cecilia!" In the photograph of the music room in Bayley Street, which was reproduced in Part II of these reminiscences, the engraving of Domenichino's St. Cecilia may be seen hanging on the wall.
4. As recounted in Part II, William Rothenstein drew this caricature of George Moore with a pencil, a blue pencil and a stub of red sealing wax. Arnold Dolmetsch noted that among those present on this occasion were Selwyn Image, Herbert Horne, Sturge Moore, Mackmurdo, Robert Steele and Lawrence Binyon.
5. The snapshot of Arnold Dolmetsch in the last issue of "The Consort" was mistakenly attributed to George Bernard Shaw. Actually it was taken in France by Jean Sinclair Buchanan, a talented pupil and friend. The one given in this issue which bears a certain resemblance to it, is that taken by George Bernard Shaw in Hindhead.
6. The photograph presented to Arnold Dolmetsch and signed by Gabriele d'Annunzio and Count Giuseppe Primoli bears the following inscription: "Au Maestro Arnold Dolmetsch. Souvenir du très grand plaisir qu'il nous a donné à Rome."
M.D.

SOME PECULIARITIES OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

BY

CARL DOLMETSCH

PECULIARITIES in human beings are attributed nowadays to inherited ancestral characteristics. The same obscure origin may similarly be ascribed to various seemingly illogical features which characterize divers musical instruments. For example: Why did the viols have frets while the violins had none? Why did the lute have double strings? How did the open strings of the guitar acquire their interval of a third in the wrong place? Sometimes these features survive because a new use is found for them. They serve a new purpose and meet new demands, whereas if they persist to no purpose and are at variance with later developments, the instrument ceases to call into being new compositions and becomes obsolete.

Although the European viol was derived from the *crwth*, in its outward form it also owed something to the six-stringed *sarbutte* or Indian viol and to the *saringhi*. Both these instruments had movable frets tied round the neck and sometimes had sympathetic strings of metal running under the fingerboard, as was also the case with some English *lyra* viols in the 16th century, according to Michael Praetorius (1614). The movable frets allowed of a fine adjustment of the intervals according to the scale or mode in use. When, however, the system of equal temperament became general, the frets were adjusted accordingly in semitones of equal value, and a fret needed only a slight bias in the case of a false string.

The frets nevertheless maintained their usefulness through imparting to the viol its characteristic clarity and purity of tone, which shows to advantage in concerted contrapuntal music. Therefore they have remained; and the violist who removes them loses this distinctively incisive quality. Another advantage derived from the frets is the clarity they impart to the *pizzicati*, which play an important part in the literature of the true viol.

According to Praetorius and to Martin Agricola, who antedated him by over half a century, the early *rebecs* and their successors, the primitive violins, had no fingerboards, so that the strings were stopped by the fingertips or the nails hooking them. Hence, there being no fingerboard, it was impossible to accommodate them with frets! In its later development, the violin family, while having acquired fingerboards, retained this peculiar feature which possessed other advantages, in that, although the number of musical keys was still restricted to three or four, the variety of modes still in use made it possible for the performer to adapt his scale so as to play always in true intonation. When equal temperament became generally adopted towards the end of the 16th century, there yet remained another advantage for the violinist in that this freedom in left hand stopping facilitated a velvety timbre and certain fine nuances of individual expression, which impart to the violin its emotional appeal.

Coming to the well-established double stringing of the lute, we find that in mediæval times this instrument was played with a quill and that this is still the practice in Morocco, in which country much of the European musical tradition of the Middle

Ages has survived. The back and forth movement of the quill or plectrum across the strings is greatly facilitated by the double strings. When the lute ceased to be sounded by the quill the double strings were nevertheless retained, for they give a sweet sympathetic resonance, as in the clavichord; were the lute to adopt single stringing it would lose much of its charm and richness.

Until the last decade of the 18th century the guitar also was double strung and had in consequence the delicate ethereal sweetness produced by its sympathetic resonance. Its two lowest pairs of strings (as with the lute of restricted compass) were frequently tuned in octaves, which gave it the advantage of low basses when used as an instrument of harmony, but was sometimes disturbing in solo music, owing to the sudden transition. The 16th century guitar (an instrument of Arabian origin) had only four pairs of strings, and these were sometimes tuned to an up and down system, as in the cithren. It had a rounded back and not much of a waist! But there existed side by side with it the Spanish plucked viol (*vihuela de mano*), which instrument was double strung like the lute. It had six pairs of strings tuned to the same intervals as the lutes and viols of the time, and it was shaped like the 17th and 18th century guitars. This instrument came into popular use at the close of the 15th century, coinciding with the expulsion of the Moors. In some parts of Spain it seems to have temporarily replaced the lute. This circumstance might have arisen through hatred of the Moors (the lute being an instrument of Moorish introduction).

The use of the *vihuela de mano* gave rise to a flourishing school of composers, among them Luis Milan, Luis de Narbaez, Diego Pisador, Alonso de Muderra, Enriquez de Valdarrabano and Venegas de Hinestrosa. At the close of the 16th century it apparently fell into disuse (together with its literature and school of composition) and was replaced by the guitar, which added a fifth pair of strings to its compass, thus lacking only the top pair of the *vihuela*. The guitar's increased range favoured the performance of the lovely Spanish dance tunes of the preceding centuries, which in Italy were played on lutes of mediæval type. Furthermore, a system of playing a purely rhythmical and harmonic type of dance music, with an arbitrary succession of chords (doubtless accompanying a voice or melodic instrument) came into general use, in which the hand swept back and forth

in *rasgado* fashion. So far, so good; but late in the 18th century a sixth pair of strings was added—not as one would have expected on the treble side, thus bringing the guitar completely in line with the *vihuela*—but in the bass. This innovation not only put the interval of a third in the open strings in the wrong place for the comfortable execution of lute and *vihuela* music written in tablature (as was also guitar music in those days), but it also restricted the range of harmonies available when playing the rhythmic dance music *rasgado* fashion; for the reason that the chords so played had always included several open strings across which the hand swept from end to end. Therefore to have the frequently unrelated open note in the bass necessitated more complicated finger stopping than heretofore. Nowadays, when the guitarist wishes to play lute or *vihuela* music from tablature he must alter his tuning in order to bring the intermediate third between the third and fourth strings.

During the last decade of the 18th century the guitar cast off its fine double strings and substituted thick single ones. This greatly facilitated the tuning of the instrument, as was remarked by the author of a guitar tutor named Federico Moretti (1799), but also it did away with that aeolian charm imparted by the sympathetic resonance of the double strings.

The single strung guitar has persisted to this day. It is more powerful and more pungent, but the resonance is much shorter. Our earlier instruments did not aim at power (in chamber music), but were loved for the more diffused tone produced by sympathetic vibration.

HOMMAGE A MARIN MARAIS (1656-1728)

BY

RICHARD NEWTON

It is not proposed, within the limits of these few pages, to attempt any evaluation of Marais as a composer. His music will certainly not be unknown to those who have attended any of the Haslemere Festivals, since pieces from his first four books for solo Viol and Continuo have, I believe, been heard each year, from the first of the Festivals onwards. Few who have listened to his music with attention will be disposed to cavil at the verdict of Mr. Gerald Hayes: "a composer whose gifts . . . should set his name, beside that of Couperin, at the head of French music." But unfortunately the original editions of his works, which are irreplaceably

necessary for their proper performance, have become exceedingly rare: and works of reference and musical histories do little to satisfy the legitimate curiosity about the life of Marais that is aroused by hearing or playing his music. I propose, therefore, to tabulate briefly the sources that I have found, after a good deal of searching, to be available to students of Marais in this country; and then to make such additions and corrections as I can at present to the biography of Marais and his family. In this way it is hoped to be of service to other inquirers, and to stimulate a much fuller investigation than has yet been accorded to this delightful and important music.

The most important part of the work of Marais is certainly to be found in his five books of *Pieces de viole*, which contain, in all, well over 500 pieces. These were all issued with the solo Viol part and the (figured) "Basse continue" in separate part-books. The following Table shows their distribution in English libraries:

Book I, solo Viol, 1686	...	...	British Museum : Rowe Collection, King's College, Cambridge (a reimpression of 1698).
Book I, Basse continue (1689)	...	...	Durham Cathedral Library
Book I, Viol and Bass (undated)	...	...	Bodleian Library, Oxford (in Roger's Amsterdam reprint).
Book II, solo Viol and Bass (1701)	...	...	Rowe Collection, Cambridge
Book II, Viol and Bass (undated)	...	...	Durham (in Roger's Amsterdam reprint).
Book III, solo Viol, 1711	...	...	British Museum
Book IV, Viol and Bass (1717)	...	...	Rowe Collection, Cambridge
Book IV, solo Viol	...	...	British Museum (reimpression of 1729)
Book V, solo Viol, 1725	...	...	British Museum

It is interesting to notice in passing that the original buyers of the first book in 1686 had to wait three years before they could obtain the Bass part, without which a complete performance was of course impossible. But Marais took advantage of the delay to add to the Bass part-book several new pieces *in score*. The Roger editions were, strictly speaking, piracies; but they may be used with confidence, as the instances in which they fail to reproduce the elaborate directions for fingering and interpretation, etc., given in the original French editions, are very few. Durham Cathedral Library is not really a public collection: but the Cathedral authorities are exceedingly helpful in making its treasures available to students at a distance. The Rowe Col-

lection can be used only at Cambridge; but access to the Library is readily and generously granted. Thus an examination of the list given above will show that the only parts not to be found in at least one English library are the Basse Continue of Book III and Basse Continue of Book V.

Among private owners, Mrs. Arnold Dolmetsch has Books I-IV (solo and bass parts complete); the late Mr. Arthur Hill had the solo parts of Books I and III (now in the possession of an Oxford bookseller); and the Wolffheim set (all parts complete, except the bass of Book V) was recently offered for sale by Mr. Otto Haas, at £300. Upon inquiry, Mr. Haas informed me that they had been sold to a private collector "who did not wish his name to be disclosed" (1).

Of the other compositions of Marais, the *Pièces en trio* of 1692 (obligingly designed for two German flutes, or two recorders, or two violins, or two treble viols, with Continuo) are to be found complete at Durham: a contemporary MS. copy of the two solo parts, with a modern transcript of the Continuo, is in the possession of the writer; and the second "dessus" (only) is in the British Museum. The three Operas of Marais are all in the British Museum, but unfortunately these contemporary editions are the equivalent of what would now be called a "Pianoforte Score," i.e., they give little more than the extreme treble and bass parts, with only occasional sketchy indications of instrumentation. But the Philidor collection at St. Michael's, Tenbury, has a complete full score of *Ariadne et Bacchus*, which shows that Marais set his strings in five parts throughout.

The only other work that Marais published was *La Gamme*, for Violin and Continuo. This appeared in 1723, and is advertised in the fifth book of Viol pieces at 7 livres 10 sols. I much regret not being able to mention any surviving copy of this: but it may well lurk undiscovered in one of the smaller French libraries. A contemporary, Titon du Tillet (of whom more hereafter) tells us that it is

une Pièce de Symphonie qui monte insensiblement par tous les tons de l'Octave, and qu'on descend ensuite en parcourant ainsi par des Chants harmonieux and mélodieux tous les tons differens de la Musique.

Turning now to biographical matters, we are struck at the outset by the queer fact that Marais, like some modern Melchizedek, appears to have had neither father nor mother: the

musical historians and reference books, at least, having not a single word to say about his parentage. But it is very probable that he had a grandfather, and a most likely guess at his identity can be made by readers of M. Henri Prunières's *le Ballet de cour en France*. Prunières collected several references to "le sieur Marais" (whom he calls "l'incomparable"), who appeared in many Court ballets from the "Ballet de Madame" (1615) until the "Ballet de la Félicité" (1639). This Marais is described as "un mime prodigieux, doublé d'un bon musicien." Sandys and Forster, in their *History of the Violin*, also quote, from some unacknowledged source, an anecdote of this Marais, who in 1611 interceded successfully on behalf of two of the royal musicians who had fallen into disgrace.

But to revert to his presumed grandson, our violist. The fullest account of him, so far as I know, is the article written by Mr. Barclay Squire for the third edition of Grove's *Dictionary of Music*. Apart from a few mistakes, this is a good work, with more detail than might have been expected from a general reference-book. But it is curious in that, unlike most of the more important articles in Grove, it gives no bibliography and almost no references to the original sources on which it was based. Squire's ultimate source was in fact *le Parnasse françois*, by Titon du Tillet (whose name is not once mentioned), though I rather think that Squire used him at second hand only (possibly through Laborde's *Essai*, which had already plundered Titon without acknowledgment). The *Parnasse françois* (1732) is a most delightful book, the work of a generous mind and penetrating insight. Though intended as an offering to the greater glory of the god-man Louis XIV, its servility somehow never causes disgust, and we are indebted to it for much information about the poets and musicians of France that would otherwise have been lost beyond recovery. I believe that the only copy in the libraries of Great Britain is that in the University Library, Glasgow, and my thanks are due to the Librarian for making this available for study.

No official documents giving the dates of Marais's birth and death are known—probably they have long ceased to exist. The information given by Titon is therefore all the more valuable. He tells us that Marais was born on the 31st May,

1656: but Squire gets this wrong in his very first line by turning May into March. This error goes back to Marpurgh's *Beyträge* (vol. II, 1756, p. 237), whence it was taken over into many later German works.

As a youth Marais studied the Viol with Sainte Colombe, but after six months Sainte Colombe dismissed him, fearing that the pupil would too soon outstrip the master. Titon relates the following story, which I cannot forbear to quote, especially as it is omitted from the Grove article:

Marais qui aimoit passionnément la Viole, voulut cependant profiter encore du sçavoir de son Maître pour se perfectionner dans cet Instrument; et comme il avoit quelque accès dans la maison, il prenoit le tems en été que Sainte Colombe étoit dans son jardin enfermé dans un petit cabinet de planches, qu'il avoit pratiqué sur les branches, d'un Mûrier, afin d'y jouer plus tranquillement et plus délicieusement de la Viole. Marais se glissoit sous ce cabinet; il y entendoit son Maître, et profitoit de quelques passages et de quelques coups d'archets particuliers que les Maîtres de l'Art aiment à se conserver; mais ne dura pas long-tems, Sainte Colombe s'étant aperçu et s'étant mis sur ses gardes pour n'être plus entendu par son Elève: cependant il lui rendoit toujours justice sur le progrès étonnant qu'il avoit fait sur la Viole; et étant un jour dans une compagnie où Marais jouoit de la Viole, ayant été interrogé par des personnes de distinction sur ce qu'il pensoit de sa maniere de jouer, il leur répondit qu'il y avoit des Elèves qui pouvoient surpasser leur Maître, mais que le jeune Marais n'en trouveroit jamais qui le surpassât.

Marais spent the whole of his life in Paris, and his changes of address can be followed from his various publications. In 1686, when he published his first book of pieces for the Viol, he was living in the "Rue du Jour proche St. Eustache du costé de la rue Montmartre." Here he would be a near neighbour of his master Lully. In 1691 a certain "Abraham du Pradel" (said to be a pseudonym of Nicolas de Blegny) published a little book called *le Livre commode des addresses de Paris*, which included a list of "Maîtres pour la Violle" that shows that Marais had moved to the rue Quincampoix: "Monsieur Maraise touche la viole par excellence, et donne des leçons chez luy, rue Quincampoix." (Rue Quincampoix, the financial quarter of the Paris of that time, became notorious a few years later, when John Law set up his bank there.) A second edition of *le Livre commode* appeared in 1692, and in this Marais's address is given as "rue Bertin Poirée." (I have not been able to see the original editions, but have had to rely on the reprint by Edouard Fournier (1878), of the second edition, in which the variant readings of the first edition are given.) But the *Pièces en trio* of 1692 show that Marais was then again living in "rue Quinquempoix, proche le Fort de Meulan," where he still was when

Ariadne et Bacchus appeared in 1696. The first edition of his second book of pieces (1701) is unfortunately not available to me at the time of writing; but *Alcione* (1706) and *Semêlé* (1709) show that Marais had then returned to rue Bertin Poirée. Barclay Squire says that when Marais published his third book of pieces he was living in the Rue de la Harpe; and it is true that this date does appear on the British Museum copy of this work. But one does not need to be a Sherlock Holmes to be able to see that this copy is a late impression, from worn plates, and that the composer's address has been re-engraved, after obliteration of the original one. The Arthur Hill copy of Book III is in fact one of the original issues, and this gives Marais' address as "rue Bertin Poirée proche le fort levesque." (The prison of For-l'Evêque was suppressed in 1780 and demolished in 1783). However, Marais did move to "Rue de la Harpe à l'Hotel Dandelot" at some time not later than 1717, when his Book IV appeared; and the late issue of Book III that has already been mentioned adds the detail that his house was "proche la rue de la Parcheminerie." According to Titon,

Marais trois ou quatre ans avant sa mort s'étoit retiré dans une maison, rue de l'Oursine, faubourg Saint Marceau, où il cultivoit les plantes et les fleurs de son jardin. Il louoit cependant une Salle rue du Batoir, quartier Saint André des Arcs, où il donnoit deux ou trois fois la semaine des leçons aux personnes qui vouloient se perfectionner dans la Viole.

(Rue de l'Oursine, or Lourcine, still exists, but its name was changed in 1890 to Rue Broca.) Marais's Book V was issued in 1725 and gives the address of the "salle" in the rue du Batoir, thus confirming Titon's statement. Since 1898 the former Rue du Batoir has been known as Rue Quatrefages. A slight difficulty is occasioned by Mattheson's *Critica Musica*, Vol. II (1725), p. 288. He writes:

Der Herr Marais, Königlicher Französischer Kammer-Musicus, hat das fünffte Buch seiner Violdigamben-Stücke, mit dem General-Bass neulich in Kupffer stechen lassen und heraus gegeben. Dieses Werck ist zu Kauff bey dem Herrn Boyvin, in der St. Honore-Strasse, wo das vergüldete Linial aushängt, ingleichen bey dem Verfasser, in der Jardinnet-Strasse.

"Jardinnet-Strasse" must surely be the Rue du Jardinnet. It seems unlikely that Marais would move again so soon, and I am inclined to think, failing some more cogent explanation, that Mattheson (or his informant) had become a little confused over Paris street-names.

Piece No. 108 of this Book V sheds a curious and unexpected light on the personal life of Marais about this time. It appears that at some time since the publication of Book IV (1717) the unfortunate composer had been obliged to submit to a surgical operation for stone. The operation as then performed was a proceeding of considerable barbarity, entirely without anæsthetics of course, and its results were frequently fatal. Marais survived the ordeal with sufficient practical philosophy to write a piece of "programme music" based upon it, which duly appears as *le Tableau de l'operation de la taille*. As a tone-picture of a surgical operation, this must surely be unique in all music. At short intervals throughout the piece, printed indications are given to show exactly what is going on, and they seem worth transcribing here. (The "apareil" is presumably a kind of framework to which the victim was strapped to prevent movement during the operation.)

L'aspect de l'apareil — Frémissement en le voyant — Résolution pour y monter — Parvenu jusqu'au hault — descent dudit apareil — Réflexions sérieuses — Entrelassement des soyes entre les bras et les jambes — l'incision — Introduction de la tenette — Icy l'on tire la pierre — Icy l'on perd quasi la voix — Ecoulement du sang — Icy l'on oste les soyes — Icy l'on vous transporte dans le lit.

One turns with relief to the next piece, *les Relevailles*, which is marked "Gay." The word "relevailles" has, I believe, survived in modern French only in the sense of "churching," but here its meaning is clearly the more general one of "convalescence."

We know from Titon that at the age of nineteen Marais married Catherine d'Amicourt; there were nineteen children of the marriage, of whom ten died young. The names of some of them are known, but no birth-dates seem to be available. A valuable source of information is provided by an article of Michel Brenet's *La Librairie musicale en France de 1653 à 1790*, printed in Vol. 8 of the *Sammelbände der Internationalen Musikgesellschaft* (1906-07). This includes full extracts of many "Privilèges" granted to musicians, including among others various members of the Marais family. From a privilège dated 22nd June, 1735, it appears that the eldest (surviving) son of Marin Marais was named Anné Marc. He is described as "notre conseiller et secretaire maison couronné de France en la chancellerie établie près notre cour de Parlement de Dauphiné." The second son must have died rather young, as a "Tombeau" for

"Marais le Cadet" appears in his father's Book V. Another son, Jean Louis, was in 1725 living in the "Rue du Four faubourg St. Germain attenante l'hôtel d'Hambourg," and in 1729 (the date of a re-issue of Book IV) in the "Rue de la Harpe vis à vis le College d'Arcourt." One wonders if this was the same house that his father had formerly occupied. But the best known of all the sons was Roland, living in 1725 in the "Rue des grands Augustins faubourg St. Germain quartier St. André des arts," and in 1729 in "Rue Dauphine chez un Notaire." Titon mentions one of the daughters as

Mlle Marais, personne d'un esprit aimable et d'un mérite distingué, peut bien tenir son rang parmi ses trois frères pour la manière brillante et délicate dont elle exécute sur la Viole.

Unfortunately, he does not give her Christian name. But it will be noticed that the terms in which he speaks of her imply his personal acquaintance with the family, and thus support his trustworthiness as an informant. This Mlle Marais had an elder sister who married Nicolas Bernier, famous as a composer of cantatas. Again, Titon does not give the Christian name, but the "Privilèges" show that it was Marguerite Pélagie. Titon devotes a whole chapter to Bernier, in the course of which he recounts a certain ecclesiastical agitation that was aroused by the marriage, when Bernier was appointed Maître at the Sainte Chapelle:

Bernier s'étant marié quelque tems après [i.e., after the death of Marc-Antoine Charpentier, in March, 1704] à la fille de Marais, célèbre Musicien . . . le Prince [the Duc d'Orleans] obtint du Chapitre, qu'il conserveroit sa place, à condition que sa femme n'habiteroit pas dans la maison destinée au Maître de Musique; exemple unique, cette place ne pouvant être remplie que par un homme dans le célibat avec l'habit Ecclésiastique.

On August 5th, 1734, Marguerite Pélagie obtained a "Privilège" for a posthumous edition of her late husband's cantatas. This shows that the date given in Grove for his death (September 5th, 1734) must be too late. Titon says that Bernier died on July 8th, 1734; but this also is probably too late—unless his widow displayed an indecent and almost incredible haste in taking a second husband. For she had become the wife of Roger van Hove at some time *before* the granting of the "Privilège," mentioned above, on August 5th, 1734.

One small error in Grove cannot be allowed to go uncorrected, because though it appears trifling in itself, it obliterates the connection of Marais with a most piquant incident in

French history. Grove, translating at first or second hand from Titon, says that Marais left in MS. a *Te Deum* "written and performed on the convalescence of the Dauphiness." But what Titon actually said was:

un *Te Deum* qui a été chanté aux Feuillants et aux PP. de l'Oratoire pour la convalescence de Monseigneur le Dauphin. . . .

(How Monseigneur le Dauphin" was transformed into "the Dauphiness" is not clear.) This *Te Deum* must surely have been written on Monseigneur's recovery from his famous "accès d'indigestion" on March 19th, 1701. Monseigneur, who was a good Catholic and a great glutton, had ended a day's Lenten fast by stuffing himself with fish ("il avait l'habitude de manger plus que trois hommes," we are told). Then, just as he was undressed for bed, he was suddenly struck with unconsciousness. In a few minutes the whole Court was in frightful confusion. At first his life was despaired of: but eventually the royal doctors, Fagon and Félix, were able to obtain "une évacuation prodigieuse haut et bas"; and Monseigneur was saved to France. Thanksgivings resounded throughout Paris. Boislisle, the editor of the *Mémoires* of Saint-Simon (vol. VIII, p. 244), tells us (without mentioning his authority) that on April 27th Du Mont, Monseigneur's "écuyer," caused a magnificent *Te Deum* to be sung at the Oratoire, in which Bossuet officiated. Taking Titon's statement together with this, we can see that it was Marais' *Te Deum* that was sung at the Oratory on April 27th. The work itself has probably long since disappeared.

It is quite possible that references to Marais may be found among the works of the *mémorialistes* and letter-writers of the period. Here, for example, is Emmanuel de Coulanges writing to his cousin, Madame de Sévigné, describing the festivities at the wedding of the Duc d'Albret and Mlle de la Trémouille on January 31st, 1696:

Les jeunes gens, pour s'amuser, dansèrent aux chansons, ce qui est présentement fort en usage à la cour; joua qui voulut, et qui voulut aussi prêta l'oreille au joli concert de Vizé, Marais, Descôteaux et Philibert; avec cela l'on attrapa minuit. . . .

But a poet, even though he be but a minor one, shall have the last word. Here is what Jen de Serré wrote, in his poem *La Musique* (1714), in praise of Marais's operas:

MARAIS suit une route et diverse et sçavante,
Son audace déplaît, son sçavoir épouvante.

MARAIS de qui la main toujours égale et sûre
Fut des vrais mouvemens la plus juste mesure,
Sur la Scène trois fois, malgré ses envieux,
Merita des sçavans l'aveu judicieux.
De son charme infernal la sombre Symphonie
Répandit dans ALCIDE une riche Harmonie.
D'ALCIONNE troublant l'hymen et le repos,
Sur les pas de COLASSE il souleva les flots.
Les sens furent émus du bruit de sa tempête.
Enfin, dans SEMELE la quatrième fête,
Les Ballets, la Chaconne, et les magiques jeux,
D'un travail obstiné furent les fruits heureux.

These somewhat desultory notes, it may be added, do not pretend to be more than a sort of report on work in progress. The writer would be happy to hear from others who may feel inclined to explore the music of Marais; and it is hoped that, if the Editor can find space, the results of further investigations may be duly reported upon in *The Consort* next year.

ORNAMENTATION IN SINGING

BY

CECILE DOLMETSCH

It is of course not possible to consider vocal ornaments entirely separately from instrumental ones, since the same rules apply more or less to both, but many people would consider instrumental ornamentation as being of greater importance. It may therefore seem strange to them that singers should at one time have been held up as the models and examples whose performance of ornaments was to be copied as closely as possible by instrumental players.

This is expressed very clearly by Jean Rousseau, who, in his *Traité de la Viole* (1687), advises viol players to "emulate the delicacy of *Singing*, and be able to imitate everything that a beautiful voice can do, with all the charms of Art . . . and to employ all the graces to the full, particularly the trill with *appoggiatura* and the plain *appoggiatura* which are fundamental to good singing."

How different is this point of view from the modern one! How often one hears a 17th or 18th century song performed without the observance of *appoggiatura* (whether they be indicated or implied), and without even a final trill, when perhaps even the accompanying instruments have ornaments in their parts. Some of the writers of the time are very explicit in their directions for the performance of every variety of trill and

mordent. As late as 1864 M. Stephan de la Madelaine, in his *Théorie du Chant*, says: "He who has mastered the trill to perfection, were he to be deprived of all other ornaments, has always the advantage of arriving easily at Cadences where this grace is usually necessary; but he who is unable to perform it, or who can only do it in a defective form, will never become a great singer, however great his learning may be in the art of singing." It should be remarked that this passage has been borrowed almost in its entirety from the treatise of an earlier writer (Tosi, 1723). Further on, M. de la Madelaine writes: "The trill being an absolute necessity, the teacher should train his pupil to practice it on all the vowels in the whole range of the voice, not only on minims, but also on quavers; it is thus that in course of time the pupil will learn the passing trill and the mordent and will be able to perform it with ease, even in the middle of a rapid passage." His instructions for the performance of the various forms of ornament are quite correct and in the tradition of the 18th century writers.

Almost as regrettable as the omission of requisite ornaments is that lame apology for a trill, the "upper mordent," which was the subject of an article in the last issue of *The Consort*. There is, of course, a trill that consists of a mere vague "wobble," and there is also a trill that is a purely mechanical alternation of notes, ending abruptly, and bearing little relation to its context, sounding in fact as though it had been "stuck on" rather than evolved naturally out of the melody. This ready-made trill is probably the result of the isolated practice of ornaments irrespective of the nature of the song.

J. Quantz (1752) says: "All the shakes must not be made with the same speed. One must not only consider the place where one practices, but also where the performance will take place. . . . Besides, one must make a difference according to the character of the piece and not confuse one kind with another as so many people do. In a sad piece the trill should be slower than in a merry one. As to slowness or quickness, nothing must be exaggerated." Indeed, as Quantz so wisely remarks, nothing must be exaggerated, and, naturally, an ornament should always be in control; it must never distort the time, and yet it should be flexible and play its part in conveying the sentiment expressed in the phrase it embellishes. It should, in fact, grow as naturally as a flower out of a spray of foliage.

Lastly, here is a word of warning from M. de la Madelaine (which is also in accordance with Tosi's teaching): "When the pupil is in possession of the trill, the master should take pains to find out whether he has the same skill in quitting it, as many people have the defect of being unable to stop the trill at will!"

IN MEMORY OF VIOLET GORDON WOODHOUSE

"There is something in Musick of Divinity more than the ear discovers; it is an Hieroglyphical and shadowed lesson of the whole world, and creatures of GOD; such a melody to the ear, as the whole World, well understood, would afford the understanding. In brief, it is a sensible fit of that harmony which intellectually sounds in the ears of GOD."

(Sir Thomas Browne, 1642).

VIOLET GORDON WOODHOUSE chose this quotation to head an article on *Old Keyed Instruments and their Music* which she contributed to the inaugural number of *Music and Letters* (January, 1920). These words will recall to those who had the privilege of hearing her the supernal quality of her approach to and interpretation of early music. During the last years of her life her clavichord playing revealed "more than the ear discovers." She died on the 9th of January, 1948.

Ed.

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE CONTENTS
OF THE
HENRY WATSON MUSIC LIBRARY, MANCHESTER
BY
LAYTON RING

It may not be generally known that there exists amongst the Henry Watson music in the Central City Library, Manchester, a large uncatalogued collection of early editions and manuscripts. I had occasion recently, through the kindness of Mr. J. F. Russell, the music librarian, and of his assistant, Mr. L. Duck, to examine this collection. The following random list may give an indication of the treasures stored therein, some of which I am sure are not to be found elsewhere. This list is purely arbitrary and by no means exhaustive: an inventory, as it were, of those items which were of particular interest to myself.

Pride of place must go to the *Manchester Corporation Viola da Gamba Book*, a fine mid-17th century manuscript of lyra viol pieces, for the most part in tablature, and very probably the collection made by Richard Sumarte, the "R.S." of many of the pieces. Twenty-two tunings for the lyra viol are given, with a selection of pieces under each, ranging from well-known tunes such as "Woodcocke" to dances and divisions (some quite difficult) by Young, William Lawes, Jenkins, Ives, Simpson and others of the brave company of Commonwealth and Restoration musicians. The transcribed copy, made early in this century, contains quite a few errors however, and should always be carefully checked against the original, if ever it is used.

Under vocal works I have noted several Elizabethan first editions: Captain Hume's "Poetical Music and Musical Humours" for viols and voices (on the list for publication in the *Musica Britannica* series), Dowland's *Lachrimae* and *Books of Ayres*, along with most of the Elizabethan writers of *Ayres*, and a collection called "Vanity of Vocal Music" with pieces by Byrd, Pilkington and others. Then there is the *First Booke of Henry Lawes' Ayres and Dialogues* of 1653, Matthew Lock's "The Tempest" and "Psyche"; a copy of *Harmonica Sacra*, Blow's *Ode on the Death of Mr. Purcell*, "the words by Mr. Dryden," for two altos, two recorders and continuo, Pepusch's songs in *Venus and Adonis* (1715), and his *Ode for St. Cecilia's Day* (1723), Buononcini's "Griselda" and a *Funeral Anthem* for the Duke of Marlborough, Greene's settings of Spenser's *Amoretti Sonnets*, with a selection of his *Catches and Canons* for three or four voices, Boyce's serenata "Solomon," "The Chaplet," and "The Shepherd's Lottery" (which, be it noted, has a part for the "Fourth Flute," a descant recorder in B flat), six *Cantatas* by Arne for solo voice and continuo, a manuscript copy of Pergolesi's "La Serva Padrona," and Graun's *Cantata "Der Tod Jesu"* of 1760, very handsomely printed in Leipzig. The excellence of the engraving makes it all the more sad to reflect that a like honour was never accorded to the *Cantatas* of the great Thomas Cantor, J. S. Bach up to this date, nor for many years to come.

Keyboard works include Felton's *Concertos* for organ or harpsichord, some *Sonatas and Concertos* by Avison, a "Sett of Lessons for the Harpsichord" by "Lully" (as the English pronounced the name of J. B. Loeillet!), "Suits of Lessons for the

Harpsichord or Spinnet" by Anthony Young, the organist of St. Clement Danes, all charming works; "Pièces pour Clavecin" (1743) by Geminiani (being an arrangement from various works), and a set of six Sonatas for harpsichord by Richard Eastcott, Jun. (1773).

The sonatas for one or more instruments with continuo are particularly interesting. There are Twelve Sonatas for violin and bass, Op. 4, and Six for 'cello, Op. 5, by Geminiani; a set of Sonatas also for 'cello and continuo, Op. 13, by Defesch; the parts of Boyce's Twelve Sonatas for two violins and bass (also to be printed in *Musica Britannica*), and a similar set of Six, Op. 4, by Burney, belonging to the Doctor's earlier and less renowned days. The Traverso is represented by Quantz' Sonatas, Op. 3, for two "flûtes traversières," and the recorder by Loeillet's Op. 1-4, each of twelve sonatas, though six of Op. 3 are for German flute. Some rare items are a set of six recorder sonatas, Op. 1, for "Flauto Solo and Basso Continuo," by Mr. Galliard (Johann Ernst Galliard) "sur l'édition d'Amsterdam de Mr. Etienne Roger," and a set of three for violin, and three for recorder by Godfrey Finger. Most of the above are in Walsh's editions.

There are, too, quite a number of theoretical works, including Tinctoris, "A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Musicke," by Morley, and Geminiani's "Treatise of Good Taste in the Art of Music," which gives information about ornamentation of considerable value, as may be seen from the excerpts quoted by Arnold Dolmetsch in his book on Interpretation.

Finally, it must be mentioned that the library has a fine collection of instruments, including a Barak Norman gamba of surpassing beauty, a Guersan Pardessus de Viole, some early 18th century trumpets, and a boxwood sopranino recorder, the "flauto piccolo" of Handel's scores. The very sight of such instruments, nevertheless, raises but melancholy feelings in my breast; they should be singing under musicians' hands, not lying stifled and fixed like so many mummies in a tomb. They are, however, at least well embalmed. That is more than can be said of some of the instruments in the collection of the Royal Manchester College of Music, not so very far away. Imagine one's delight in identifying a fine gamba amongst the trophies hung

up in glass cases there. But, alas! its strings are broken, its shoulders thick with black dust. No matter (thinks civic-minded officialdom), better to be mute and belong to the nation, than eloquent and the property of a musician.

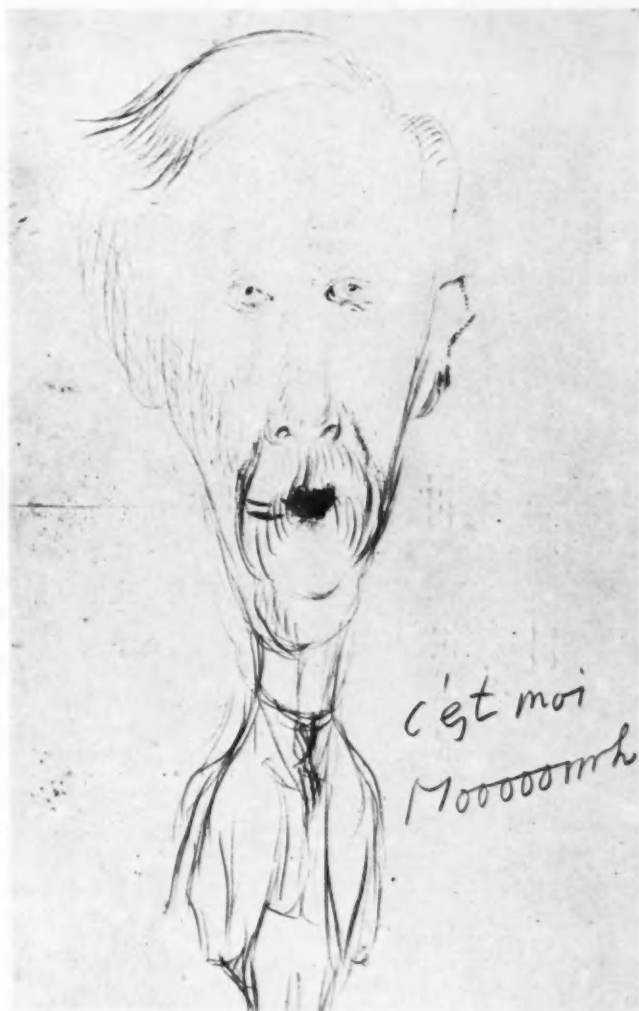
[Though I am entirely in agreement with Mr. Layton Ring, it is understandable that custodians who are not trained craftsmen cannot take the responsibility and risks involved in the restoration and maintenance in playing order of the instruments in their custody. Nevertheless, it has been done, notably in Paris by Paul Brunold, who, when he was custodian of the Musée du Conservatoire, organised a series of concerts on historic instruments in the museum which aroused much interest, as was recounted in *The Consort* No. 6.—Ed.]

UNMEASURED PRELUDES FOR HARPSICHORD
BY
CHRISTOPHER WOOD

PLAYERS of keyboard instruments who are in search of the full beauty which the right interpretation of early music reveals will be richly rewarded if they turn their attention to the fascinating *Préludes non mesurés* of the French Clavecinistes, Louis Couperin, Le Bègue, D'Anglebert, Clérambault, Gaspard le Roux, D'Andrieu and others, dating from between 1650 and 1725. These preludes are free compositions without bar-lines, sometimes written in semibreves throughout, and sometimes in a "mixed" notation consisting of semibreves interspersed with passages written in shorter notes.

The A major Suite for harpsichord by Handel begins with an unmeasured prelude. In 1720 Handel himself supervised the publication of his first book of Suites, "because," he says, "sur-reptitious and incorrect copies have got abroad." One may therefore conclude that he felt the notation of this prelude to be perfectly satisfactory. It is written in the "mixed" notation of the French composers except for the presence of bar-lines, which, however, cannot possibly be made to correspond to bars of equal duration.

Three years previously, François Couperin had published eight preludes in his method *L'Art de toucher le Clavecin* (1717) in measured notation, "to make them easier to teach and to learn," he says. He must have realised that the proper understanding of the traditional unmeasured notation was being forgotten. He further explains that, although he has written his

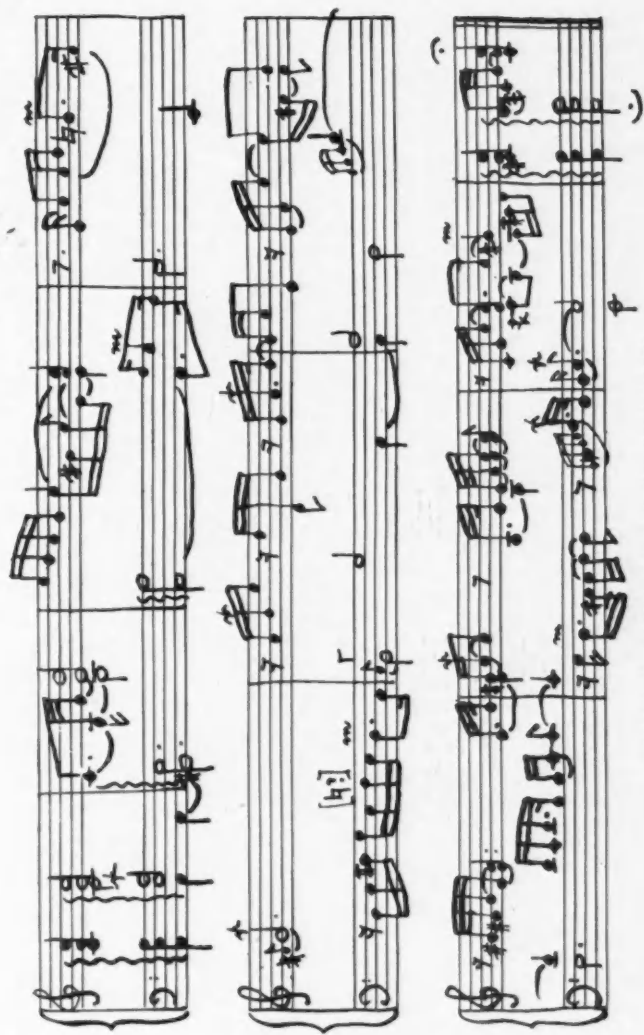


GEORGE MOORE
A Caricature by
William Rothenstein

7

Prelude
ré mineur

A PRELUDE BY LOUIS COUPERIN



FREE INTERPRETATION OF THE SAME
By CHRISTOPHER WOOD



Gabriele d'Annunzio

Ben Mastro Rocco Belmontelli
 I ordered the hat and shirt of the same color

GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO AND COUNT PRIMOLI

preludes in ordinary notation, "there is a customary style which should be followed A Prelude is a free composition in which the imagination follows all that comes to it Those who will use these set Preludes must play them in an easy manner, without binding themselves to strict time, unless I have marked it by the word "mesuré."

How then can we best recapture the "customary style" of the 17th and 18th centuries? Arnold Dolmetsch says in his book on Interpretation that these free preludes are "as yet inviolate from modern editors." He also states that "their realisation in ordinary notation is impossible." Paul Brunold, who edited Louis Couperin's works so admirably for the Lyre Bird Press, also acknowledges defeat in this respect. Greatly daring, I have nevertheless attempted to do so, not with any pretensions of having discovered the one and only right solution, nor with much hope of indicating exact time-values anywhere, but rather as a means of explaining what I feel to be the best approach to these beautiful and still neglected pieces.

For the purpose of study, I have put one of Louis Couperin's short preludes into bars. My realisation will be found on another page, facing a reproduction of the original notation. This piece appeared to me to fall naturally into the rhythm of a Chaconne, with the proviso that my notation should not be taken too literally, but be interpreted with the elasticity, unevenness, accelerations and pauses that this music seems to demand. Chords written vertically should be broken freely, sometimes broadly, sometimes more rapidly. I have adopted François Couperin's notation for short appoggiature (*ports-de-voix*), mordents and shakes.

The semibreves of Louis Couperin's notation may represent any kind of note, even the shortest. This is obvious when, for instance, one finds in some of his preludes a shake fully written out in semibreves. The long wavy lines are not phrase marks, but rather "harmony marks," which indicate that a note should be held until the line ends. His phrase marks are rare; but a slur, which he constantly marks over two adjacent notes, generally means that the first note is an appoggiatura.

At this point it may be helpful to consult Arnold Dolmetsch's book again, page 293, where he provides a clear demonstration of the bare harmonic structure of a D'Anglebert prelude. And then, by carefully observing the exact length of

Louis Couperin's wavy lines, the harmonic structure will become clear, and the intervening semibreves, whether they be passing notes in the middle of a chord, recitativo-like phrases or runs—all of whose time-values have to be guessed—serve to weld the prelude into a coherent and eloquent whole.

After trying out my transcription, I would like to suggest that players immediately read it again in the semibreve notation, which, I venture to hope, will already seem less enigmatic than at first sight and perhaps be a pointer to the interpretation of the more elaborate unmeasured preludes of the French school.

FRANCOIS COUPERIN'S PREFACE
TO HIS

THIRD BOOK OF HARPSICHORD PIECES (1722)

I HOPE that all those who admire my Compositions will notice that in this Third Book I have striven more than ever to continue to give them pleasure; and I venture to feel sure that it will please them quite as much as the two preceding volumes.

A new sign will be found, namely a comma ('). Its purpose is to mark the end of *melodic* or *harmonic phrases* and to show that one should slightly separate the end of a phrase before passing on to the next one; generally this is almost imperceptible; yet, if this brief silence is not respected, people of good taste feel that there is something lacking in the performance. In a word, it is the same difference as between those who read aloud in a continuous flow of words and those who respect the full-stops and the commas. These silences should make themselves felt without distorting the time.

In this third book there are some pieces which I call *Pièces croisées*. It may be remembered that there is one of this kind in my *second* book called *Les Bagatelles*. This *Pièce croisée*, as also all the other pieces with the same indication, should be played on two keyboards, one of which has been pushed back.⁽¹⁾ On a harpsichord with only one keyboard or on a spinet, one should play the upper part as it is written and the bass part an octave lower; and when the bass cannot be transposed down, the upper part should be played an octave higher. These pieces are also well suited to be played on two flutes or oboes, as also on two violins, two viols or other instruments of identical pitch, provided that the players transpose them to suit their instruments.

(1) In the harpsichords Couperin is speaking of, the upper keyboard was pushed back to uncouple the keyboards.

I am always painfully surprised (after all the care I have taken to mark all the ornaments which are in keeping with my pieces, and of which I have given a separate and sufficiently intelligible explanation in a special *Method* entitled *L'Art de toucher le Clavecin*) to hear my pieces played by people who have learnt them without troubling to follow my indications. This is unpardonable negligence, in that it is not a question of personal preference which ornaments one chooses to play. I therefore declare that my pieces should be played exactly as I have marked them; and that they will never make the desired impression on people of good taste unless everything I have marked is scrupulously observed, without addition or omission.

I ask pardon of Messieurs the Purists and Grammarians for the style of my Prefaces: in them I am speaking of my Art, and if I had tried to imitate the sublimity of their Art, I might perhaps be speaking less well of mine. I would never have expected my Pieces to achieve immortality; but since several famous Poets have honoured them by parodying them, these marks of distinction may possibly, in future times, allow them to share a reputation which they originally owed solely to the charming parodies they inspired. In this new book I express in advance, to my self-chosen collaborators, all the gratitude which such flattering company inspires in me, by providing them, in this third volume, with a vast new field of action in which to exercise their gifts.

Couperin.

[It is obvious that no ridicule is implied here by the word parody, which, in 18th century usage in France, applied to poems inspired by and set to instrumental pieces, Titon du Tillet writes in *Le Parnasse Français*, page 665, that some of the melodies of Couperin's harpsichord pieces were felt to be so noble and full of grace that several of them were set to words. The same author mentions, on page 573, that the poet Jacques Vergier wrote parodies to some of Lully's most beautiful airs for violin.

Contrary to Couperin's expectations, his pieces have outlived the poems, which, as yet, I have been unable to trace.—Ed.]

SUPPLEMENT TO THE THIRD BOOK OF
HARPSICHORD PIECES
CONCERTS ROYAUX (1722)

THE Pieces which follow are of another kind than those I have published until now. They are suitable not only for the harpsichord, but also for the violin, the flute, the oboe, the viol and the bassoon. I composed them for the little chamber concerts to which I was summoned by Louis XIV almost every Sunday throughout the year. These compositions were played by Messieurs Duval, Philidor, Alarius and Dubois, with myself at the harpsichord.

Should they be as acceptable to the taste of the public as they were to that of the late King, I have enough of them to furnish several complete volumes.

I have arranged them according to keys and I have retained the title whereby they were originally known at Court in 1714. And in 1715.

[There can be no doubt as to the favourable reception of the four *Concerts Royaux* which were printed at the end of his third book of harpsichord pieces. Two years later he published eleven more entitled *Les Goûtes Réunis*, which included *L'Apothéose de Corelli*. These were followed by *L'Apothéose de Lully* (1725), *Les Nations* (four *Ordres* or *Suites*, 1726), and *Pièces de Voiles* (1728). His last publication, three years before his death, was the Fourth Book of Harpsichord Pieces.—Ed.]

FRANCOIS COUPERIN'S PREFACE
TO HIS

FOURTH BOOK OF HARPSICHORD PIECES (1730)

THESE pieces were finished about three years ago; but as my health has been declining from day to day, my friends advised me to stop working, and I have not written anything important since then. I thank the Public for their continued approbation: I feel that I have earned this in some measure by the zeal I have had to give pleasure. As no one has composed more pieces of various kinds than I have, I hope that my family will find enough in my portfolios [i.e., unpublished manuscripts] to make me regretted, if indeed regrets can be of any use to one when life is over. But one should at least have this idea in mind when one's goal is to deserve a chimerical immortality to which nearly all men aspire.

Postscript to this Book

My original intention when I began the 25th *Ordre* in this book was that it should be in C major and minor. But after composing the first piece, the idea of writing one in E flat came into my mind, one which would be in the relative major of C minor (and this for a good reason). But as the first and the third pieces have been mislaid, this *Ordre* is given as best as may be, considering that, owing to my infirmities, I have been unable to supervise the publication of this work myself. If, later on, these two missing pieces are found, I will put this right myself; or, at any rate, I will give instructions to those who do it for me. In which case, the framed title on page 48 above *Le Visionnaire* becomes superfluous. But this does not impair the book as a whole nor any piece in particular.

Couperin.

[To my knowledge, the missing pieces have never been found.—Ed.]

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